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ABSTRACT

Results of a 1981 needs survey for 8,564 students at 12 campuses of the California State University (CSU) system are summarized. The Student Needs and Priorities Survey assessed: life goals and educational priorities, attitudes concerning academic and social experiences on campus, and institutional and personal problems. Variations are reported by age, ethnicity, sex, and class level (lower- and upper-division and graduate division day and evening students). Findings include the following: career considerations dominated all other educational priorities; the most pervasive student goals focused on practical and immediate rewards; campus choice was influenced by program availability and reputation, cost, and convenience to home and work; academic concerns were more important to students than campus support services or social activities; 30 percent gave generally negative evaluations of instructional quality, citing poor communication skills and lack of interpersonal concern among faculty; and about one-fourth expressed serious concern about college finances. External factors (e.g., family obligations, job, finances, personal problems) were cited by 40 percent as impeding educational objectives, while campus obstacles were noted by 25 percent. The questionnaire is appended. (SW)

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The Social Systems Research Center at California State University, Dominguez Hills had primary responsibility for the collection and processing of data reported in this study. Dr. Herman Loether is center director, and Mary Nance served as project coordinator of the survey. Masa Kikuta performed most of the computer analyses.

Among other things, the SSRC was responsible for the development and testing of the questionnaires; the design and monitoring of sampling procedures; and data collection, coding, and processing. The center also conducted a faculty survey in conjunction with the one on students, and is currently planning a series of personal interviews with students at each of the twelve participating campuses. A technical report on the project will be prepared by the SSRC later this year; it will display and summarize all of the findings from the study in a more detailed fashion.

The work of the SSRC staff was thorough, professional, and efficient at every stage of the project. The SNAPS study is one of the most comprehensive and ambitious surveys ever conducted in the California State University system, and the SSRC managed the data processing demands with technical precision and accuracy. The center also provided valuable assistance to campus coordinators, and is the major resource for continuing analysis of the data.

The series of activities on which the project is based were planned and sponsored by the Office of Academic Program Improvement of the CSU Chancellor's Office. Dean Linda Bunnell Jones provided administrative support for the project. Dr. Joseph Casanova of California State University, Los Angeles provided administrative and technical assistance at various stages of the project. The campus coordinators responsible for implementation of the survey included:

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All of these persons share in whatever positive contribution the summary makes to the system or to individual campuses. Of course, the author is solely responsible for any errors in fact or judgment and for all interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations.

Stephen L. Daigle

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

This report is intended to provide a narrative summary of findings from the Student Needs and Priorities Survey (SNAPS) administered to 8,500 students in the California State University system in the Spring of 1981. Twelve campuses - Fresno, Fullerton, Los Angeles, Northridge, Pomona, Sacramento, San Francisco, Bakersfield, Dominguez Hills, Humboldt, San Bernardino and Sonoma - chose to participate in the survey. Although seven campuses elected not to participate, analysis of the sample indicated that the data do have systemwide significance and implications; i.e., there were few important differences between sample and system characteristics across categories of student age, ethnicity, sex, major, or class level.

A more detailed, technical report on the findings will be prepared later this year by the Social Systems Research Center at California State University, Dominguez Hills. This report attempts to provide a narrative summary of the major findings from the survey; examine student sub-group variations through simple bivariate analysis; describe the sampling procedure and establish the representativeness of the sample; present some comparative data from other surveys against which the CSU findings might be assessed; identify areas that deserve further study by individual campuses; and offer some recommendations for policy-related research and action systemwide.

The questionnaire asked a stratified, random sample of students from selected class clusters to respond to the following issues:

Life goals and educational priorities

Levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their academic and social experiences on campus

Obstacles or problems, whether institutional or personal in nature, which might hinder progress toward their educational goals.

Here is a brief overview of the major findings. For a more detailed examination of these issues and related data, the reader is urged to consult the full report.

Life Goals and Educational Priorities

Career considerations dominated all others in the educational priorities of CSU students. There were some predictable emphases by major (e.g., personal expression in the arts, social work in education, financial success in professional fields), but the most pervasive student goals focused on rewards that were tangible, practical, and immediate. The strong career orientation held across all categories of student age, class level, ethnicity, and sex. These findings parallel similar ones from student surveys nationwide.

Campus Choice and Degree Objectives

Program availability and reputation, low cost, and convenience to home and work collectively structure student choice of a CSU campus to attend. These are very pragmatic concerns, and suggest that one of the unique features of the CSU system is its ability to address all of these factors simultaneously -- comprehensive degree and course offerings, comparatively low cost, respectable levels of academic reputation, and convenient locations and class scheduling. Nontraditional students were most likely to emphasize these things, while the more traditional students usually cited a wider range of considerations, including social motivations.

The data also indicated that about 85% of CSU students have serious academic goals (i.e., a degree) at their current institution, and that one in five have rather ambitious long-term degree plans (e.g., an advanced or professional degree).

Academic Programs and Support Services

Academic concerns rated much higher in importance to students than campus support services or social activities, although the latter were often more favorably evaluated in terms of perceived quality. Academic issues were of greater concern to females and nontraditional students, while younger, full-time students and ethnic minorities rated social activities and support services higher in both importance and quality than did other groups. Beyond these general patterns, more specific findings could be identified:

a) Students majoring in several technical and professional disciplines accorded low rankings to the importance of academic matters, yet also tended to be among the least satisfied with the quality of both faculty and instruction.

b) Asian students were among the least satisfied groups on practically every issue, especially those concerning instruction and faculty.

c) "Smaller" campuses were rated better than "larger" campuses in almost every category.

d) Student transfer plans were unrelated to their ratings of institutional quality on programs or services. Fully 75% of the sample expressed no plans to transfer from their present campus before completing their educational objectives. If students had transfer plans (only nine percent had "definite" plans), they were usually not related to anything within direct control of their current institution.

Instructional Quality and Advising

Thirty percent of the sample gave generally negative evaluations of instructional quality, citing poor communications skills and lack of interpersonal concern among faculty. Advising received negative ratings of 44%; students again emphasized the apparent lack of faculty empathy as well as poor administrative coordination of advising services, whether career or academic.

Finances, Scheduling, and Workload

About one-fourth of the sample expressed serious concern about college finances, with ethnic minorities and traditional students being most concerned. Students would like to see more classes offered before the noon hour, and scheduling convenience was identified as a major factor in determination of unit loads. Grades and degree program requirements were also prime considerations influencing workload decisions.

Campus Obstacles and Student Retention

Perhaps the clearest and most consistent pattern in the entire study concerned student attrition and retention. Campus obstacles (such as poor instruction, support services, scheduling, etc.) were cited by only 25% as being major impediments to reaching one's educational objectives. By comparison, external factors (e.g., family obligations, job, finances, personal problems, etc.) were chosen by 40%, and 34% said neither type of obstacle was a major problem. Although this general pattern tended to hold across most student categories, these exceptions could be identified: full-time and unemployed students were most likely to perceive "no" major obstacles; part-time, Hispanics, employed, and students with low grade point averages tended to be concerned about problems of an external nature; Asians were the only major group to consistently identify the institution as the source of greatest concern. For the most part, students were much more willing to "blame" themselves or external circumstances for educational problems, including intentions to transfer.

Transfer Plans and Overall Satisfaction

For the most part, transfer plans tended to be products of either personal academic aspirations or external circumstances; seldom did they bear any significant relationships to the perceived quality of instruction, support services, or social life at the current institution. Indeed, 77% of the sample gave a generally positive assessment of their overall experiences on campus, a percentage which remained relatively constant across almost all student categories. Again, this finding is consistent with scores of student surveys in institutions of higher education. Indeed, viewed in their broadest context, findings from the SNAPS data do not appear to be very different, in either direction or degree, from findings about the mood and orientations of college students generally. All are products of an American political culture which is based largely on a Jeffersonian belief in the virtues and rewards of formal education. Students in the CSU system are thus quite "typical" and reasonably satisfied with what they are doing, and with what they are receiving.

The study concludes with five recommendations for campus administrators to consider:

1) Each campus should perform a detailed analysis of the data from its own sample, and make some comparisons to the systemwide findings. All 19 campuses are encouraged to support and participate in future efforts to expand the scope, depth, and quality of the SNAPS project.

2) The extreme negative ratings accorded to institutional programs and services by Asian students deserve greater attention and study, especially at campuses with high concentrations of Asian students.

3) Academic and career advising appear badly in need of more efficient and effective delivery systems. A fundamental reorganization of advisement structures and procedures may be required -- one of greater centralization within academic affairs of all advising services, greater faculty involvement through systematic reward systems (both formal and informal), and much greater use of computer-assisted advising.

4) Apparently, very few students choose to attend a CSU campus, or decide to leave one, because of the availability or quality of student support services and social activities and programs. Few impressive statistical relationships can be found in this or scores of similar surveys which explore the relationship of student recruitment and retention to such services. On three separate questions in this survey, the majority of students indicated that among their needs and priorities,

athletics, social activities, tutoring, personal counseling, on-campus housing, and child care services rank low. It is recognized, of course, that some of these services represent a critical need and a very high priority to particular students. Still, the roles, costs, and effectiveness of these student support services and social activity programs should be systematically evaluated at each campus.

5) The relationships between the cognitive orientations expressed in the SNAPS questionnaire and the actual behavior patterns of those students deserve further study, where technically feasible. Since 52% percent of the respondents in the SNAPS survey volunteered their student identification numbers, survey responses of these students could be linked to computerized data files on academic performance, workload, persistence, graduation rates, and other behavioral outcomes from alumni surveys (e.g., career advancement).

INTRODUCTION

In the Spring semester 1981, the Chancellor's Office of The California State University sponsored a comprehensive survey of student attitudes. The questionnaire asked a stratified, random sample of students from selected class clusters to respond to the following issues:

> Life goals and educational priorities.
>
> Levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their academic and social experiences on campus.
>
> Obstacles or problems, whether institutional or personal in nature, which might hinder progress toward their educational goals.

This report has relatively modest objectives, particularly from a technical standpoint. It seeks to do the following:

1) Provide a brief, narrative summary of the major findings from the student needs and priorities survey (SNAPS). The focus is systemwide, although some differences between large versus small and quarter versus semester campuses are also noted.

2) Examine student sub-group variations through simple bivariate analysis. No attempt is made to perform multi-variate analysis on the data. Accordingly, the relationships that are identified as being substantively significant should be interpreted with some caution. Statistical significance tests and specific measures of association play only minor roles in this discussion.[1]

3) Describe the sampling procedure and establish the representativeness of the sample.

4) Offer a few comparative statistics from other surveys against which the CSU findings might be assessed.

5) Identify the areas that seem to deserve primary attention and more detailed analysis by individual campuses, along with some recommendations for policy-related research and action.

Background and Procedures

Twelve of the nineteen campuses responded positively to the invitation to join the SNAPS project. The participating campuses included Bakersfield, Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Fullerton, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Northridge, Pomona, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, and Sonoma. Funding and administrative coordination for the study was provided by the Office of Academic Program Improvement in the Chancellor's Office. The Social System Research Center (SSRC) at California State University, Dominguez Hills performed most of the technical work, including questionnaire design and testing, dissemination of sampling procedures, and data collection and processing. A faculty coordinator and student assistants were appointed at each campus to implement the selection of the sample and administration of the questionnaire.

A stratified, random sample of classes was chosen as one means of approximating a cross section of the student population on campus. Classes were selected in proportion to the number of students enrolled by class level in each of two time segments -- day and evening. This procedure yielded six distinct clusters of classes, and appropriate proportions were chosen from each:

Lower-division day and evening
Upper-division day and evening
Graduate-division day and evening

A total of 8,564 students responded to the survey, or an average of 714 per campus. The seven "large" campuses usually had more than 800 students in their samples, and the five "small" campuses had at least 500 cases. The anonymity of the individual campus was preserved in the data collection, storage, processing, and reporting activities, although all campuses were provided access to and information on systemwide data. All of the data for each campus and for the system generally is currently available to campus users on the systemwide Cyber computer. Information concerning access to the data files and related SPSS program can be obtained from SSRC at Dominguez Hills. A more detailed discussion of sample selection and representativeness is contained in a later section and Appendix A.

The student needs and priorities survey being reviewed here was actually part of a series of survey efforts planned or conducted by SSRC. A pretest of the SNAPS questionnaire was completed at four campuses in 1980, and some of these data provide useful points of comparison with the second, expanded study. A mail survey to faculty (return rate = 386) was

also conducted in 1981; it sought faculty opinions on the same items that were asked of students. Detailed data from all three surveys will be reported by SSRC in a more lengthy, companion document to this report. Institutional researchers, academic administrative analysts, and support service directors will probably want to review the more technical presentation of data in that study.

Two future activities in the SNAPS series are worth noting. The SSRC is currently planning to conduct personal interviews with a random sample of students from this survey who indicated a willingness to be interviewed. This information should serve as a useful adjunct to survey items on educational plans, instructional quality, advising, support services, campus social life, and so forth. Moreover, the Chancellor's Office hopes to repeat the SNAPS study every three years or so, and to again encourage all 19 campuses to participate. If these efforts are successful, in a period of a few years the CSU will have a very comprehensive data bank of student attitudes concerning educational aspirations, evaluations, and problems.

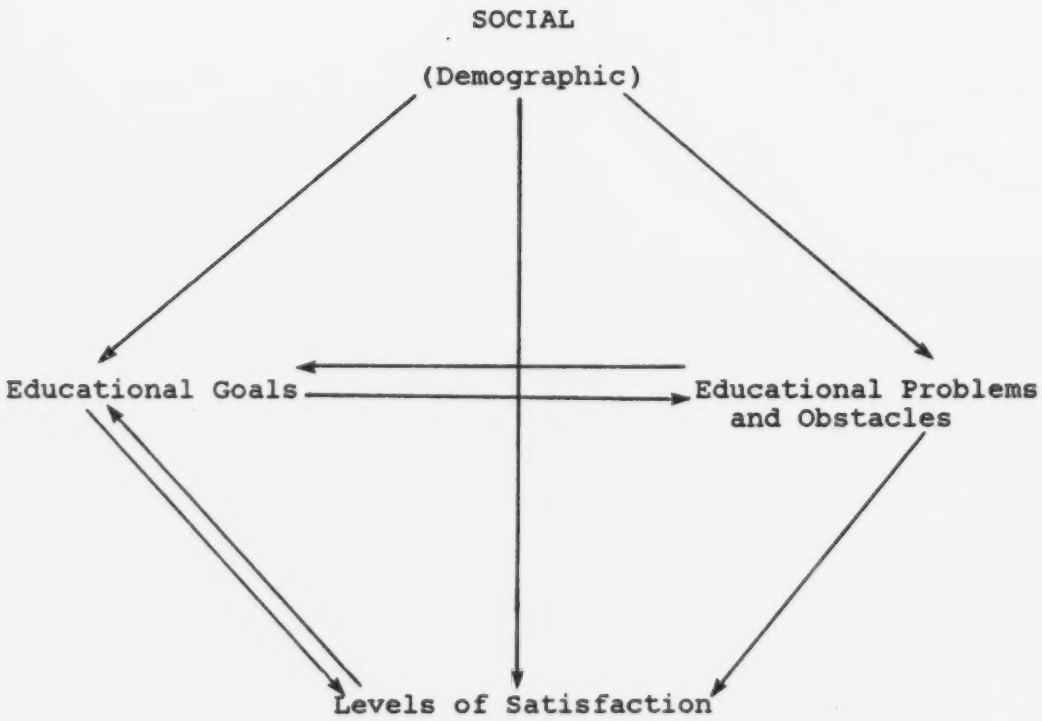
Limitations of Survey Data

Unfortunately, there are some inherent problems which can be expected to plague any kind of survey, however ambitious in scope or systematic in design. First, although survey data offer clues to motivational factors and intentionality, they are notoriously poor predictors of specific behavior patterns.[2] In other words attitudes and behavior are not necessarily congruent in any "logical" sense. Moreover, as attitudes or general values become more abstract, they tend to have even less relevance for behavior.

Second, if attitudes are generally poor predictors of behavior, they are even poorer predictors of other attitudes. Cognitive beliefs, feelings, and opinions seldom form well-integrated constellations. It would be surprising if student educational plans and evaluations were not rather diffuse concerns among a host of competing life demands and experiences.

Third, although social and demographic factors usually bear the strongest relationships to both attitudes and behavior, the correlations are typically weaker than one might intuitively expect. Indeed, very strong correlations in social and educational research often only confirm the obvious and trivial. Still, social categories at least offer easily identifiable groups around which to structure policy decisions and actions.

Fourth, although multi-variate analysis offers the best method for drawing explanatory meaning from social and attitudinal data, the sequence of causation is not always clear. For example, do students with high I.Q.s get better grades because they interact frequently with faculty, or do brighter students simply seek out faculty more often than low achievers? Leaving aside the important issue of behavior, consider the causal nexus of antecedent, intervening, and dependent variables in the diagram below:



In short, educational attitudes and behavior are products of many factors, some of which are institutionally related, and others which have little or nothing to do with the instructional program or support services. Life goals and educational plans are largely "givens" from the student's social background, although inadequate advising or (conversely) an influential faculty member may change things.

Similarly, evaluations of one's campus experiences (academic and social) depend simultaneously on social background and condition (age, employment, class level, ethnicity); prior expectations about and goals for education; and personal problems or institutional obstacles, whether real or perceived. Social factors, expectations, perceptions, and evaluations all interact in a complex web of relationships to produce specific student attitudes and they, in turn, interact with situational variables to determine student behavior.

All of this simply implies that survey data have some inherent limitations, particularly if one is interested in "explaining" or predicting specific patterns or rates of behavior. Attitude surveys are best viewed as broad information sources on what students want, what they think they are getting, and how satisfied they profess to be. Surveys may be used as early warning systems to identify and remedy problem areas before they cause serious problems for the student or the institution. At a minimum, survey data should be evaluated in the context of other sources of evidence about students and the institution; "high" or "low" ratings, "good" or "bad" evaluations assume meaning only in some comparative sense. If a campus has chosen to spend few resources on career advising, poor student evaluations concerning this activity would mean much less than if the reverse were true.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Too often surveys concentrate on asking students how they feel about things without asking them where they wanted to go or what they expected to get in the first place. Levels of satisfaction, the perceptions of obstacles and so forth are intimately linked to prior life goals and educational expectations. Students attend college, in part, to learn whether it is "for" them. For some, the answer turns out to be "no," or perhaps they never had serious degree plans but were attending for other reasons. This first section attempts to sort out some of the reasons for college attendance and campus choice. Other data from the survey can then be evaluated within this broader context.

Life Goals

Questions about broad life goals, values, aspirations, and motivations run the inevitable risk of eliciting only socially acceptable responses. This survey apparently was no exception. Students rated independence, security, creativity, and altruism as their most important goals in life, while power, money, and social status were least valued. Here are the percentages of those who responded "very important" or "important" to the question on life goals:

An opportunity to use my special abilities and aptitudes	97%
A stable secure future	83%
An opportunity to be creative and original	83%
An opportunity to be helpful to others	82%
An opportunity to work with people rather than things	73%
An opportunity to be relatively free of supervision by others	65%
Adventure	62%
A chance to exercise leadership	60%
A chance to earn a great deal of money	54%
Social status and prestige	37%

Life goals showed slight variations by ethnicity and sex, and substantial variations by degree program. The most important ethnic differences appeared to be these: Blacks rated a stable future higher than other groups; Blacks and Asians expressed greater concern for money and social status than others; and Blacks and Hispanics were more interested in "working with people" than were Whites or Asians. Similarly, female students were far more likely than males to rate working with people and "being helpful to others" as important life goals.

Financial goals and social status received far greater emphasis among majors in professional disciplines (architecture, business administration, communications, computer science, engineering) than in the arts, humanities, social sciences, education, agriculture, or physical sciences. Creativity received very high ratings by students majoring in architecture, the arts, and communications, and low ratings from majors in business administration and computer science. Students in education, the health professions, and psychology expressed strong preference for "working with people," while percentages for students in the professional, scientific, and agricultural disciplines were below system-wide norms. Finally, majors in agriculture, the arts, and humanities were less interested in insuring a stable future for themselves than other students. Obviously, few of these differences were surprising as far as their direction was concerned, but their magnitudes were usually less pronounced than might be assumed in the absence of such evidence.

With three exceptions, there were few significant variations by age or class level. The data do indicate that younger and lower division students are somewhat more likely than other students to emphasize financial earning power, social status, and a stable future as important life goals. Working students also cited the development of leadership qualities as a prime objective.

Educational Priorities

The issue of educational motivations is more likely to evoke "true" values than questions about broader life goals for at least two reasons. First, investment in college entails fewer psychological commitments or philosophical implications than investment in life, and so there is less incentive to offer guarded responses. Second, the outcomes and rewards of college attendance tend to be more tangible and immediate than the abstract and long-term goals of life generally, which makes it easier for students to identify their motivations. For these and other reasons, almost two-thirds of CSU students chose career preparation and job enhancement as

having the highest priority in their academic pursuits. Only one in five chose intellectual growth and stimulation, and one in ten rated personal growth and self-understanding as having highest priority. Social growth and understanding received 6% and aesthetic and cultural awareness 2%. These findings are in sharp contrast to those concerning life motivations; students apparently attend college to advance a rather narrow portion of broader life aspirations. Intellectual, philosophical, social, and aesthetic growth rate far behind career considerations and its concomitants.

Indeed, the career component of the question on educational priorities so dominated other options that few sub-group differences of any significance were reported. This was true for categories of age, sex, ethnicity, class level, employment status, campus type, and transfer intentions.

The only variable that did produce significant variations in educational priorities was degree program. For example, career preparation was considerably less important to majors in the arts, humanities, and social and physical sciences, while intellectual growth was rated much higher than average. Aesthetic values were, predictably, far more important to majors in the arts and humanities than others, while psychology majors were the only ones to express a strong interest in social growth.

Degree Objectives

In an alleged era of revolving campus doors of stopout, dropout, extended education, nontraditional students and the like, it is somewhat surprising to learn that CSU students have rather ambitious educational goals of a long-term nature. While 28% of the respondents planned to pursue an MA degree at their current institution, 41% planned to pursue the MA in general. Another 21% expressed plans to eventually obtain a Ph.D, Ed.D, MD, DDS, or JD. Only 3% had no current degree objective, another 6% were undecided, and 6% were working toward a certificate or credential.

Such data suggest that the concept and goal of a degree of some kind is still of compelling significance to most students. They are not "floaters"; indeed, having entered higher education at whatever level, there is almost a moral sense that one "should" get a degree in something, from some institution, at some point. Only 1% said they had no interest in ever getting a degree. As the tangible benefits of a college degree have waned in recent decades, its symbolic value as an expression of self-achievement apparently remains strong.

Campus Choice

The reasons students offer for attending a specific campus have always been a major concern in educational research. Such data carry, at once, marketing, programmatic, and service implications. Campus choice is of particular interest in California where four strong and relatively distinct segments compete for enrollments in higher education. Students are often able to choose among a dozen or more campuses within a thirty-mile radius of home, both within and outside the CSU.

The percentages below represent the number who responded "important" or "very important" to a list of possible reasons for attending a campus of the CSU. Clearly, the most significant factors are program availability, low cost, academic reputation, and physical proximity to home and work. These are very pragmatic concerns, and are probably present to some extent in the decision to attend any university. But perhaps the peculiar attraction of the CSU system is its ability to address all of these factors simultaneously -- comprehensive degree and course offerings, low cost, respectable levels of academic reputation, and convenient locations and class scheduling.

Availability of a particular major or academic program	73%
Low Cost	64%
Academic reputation of a particular field or major	62%
Close to home and/or work	60%
General academic reputation of school	58%
Opportunity to work or maintain job while attending school	50%
City or geographic setting where campus is located	33%
Overall appearance of campus	25%
Size of campus population	22%
Recommendations from friends or family members	22%

Convenient public transportation to the school	18%
Chance to leave home	11%
On-campus residences	10%
Ethnic composition of student body	10%
Age of student body	8%
Availability of on-campus child care services	7%
Reputation of its athletic programs	6%

Older and upper-division and graduate students are attracted primarily by practical concerns (program availability, low cost, convenience, close to home and work), while younger and lower-division students cite a much wider range of motivational factors -- campus appearance, student population size and composition, housing, athletics, recommendations by others, and most important, simply a desire to leave home. These distinctions hold as well for part-time and working students; they are much more likely to attend school if it can be conveniently integrated with home responsibilities and work schedules.

Most of the reasons for choice of campus produced minor variations by ethnic status, but the two strongest factors were child care services and the ethnic composition of the student body. Predictably, all ethnic minorities rated the importance of student characteristics much higher than Whites in a choice of a campus; Blacks and Hispanics also expressed greater than average concern about the availability of child care services.

Campus choice also produced some interesting differences according to institutional size. Forty percent of the students at the five small campuses rated student population size as being "important" or "very important" compared to only 14% at the seven large campuses. Conversely, school reputation was rated as being of greater importance at large campuses (62%) than at small ones (46%). It thus appears that students at small campuses are attracted partly by its smaller size, and that students at larger campuses view school reputation as a prime concern. In addition, program reputation was cited more frequently by students at large campuses (66% compared to 52%), although institutional size was not related to the motive of program availability.

There were also no important differences in campus choice by semester versus quarter campuses. Finally, the distinction between urban and rural campuses did not produce very meaningful results because a) it was not always clear which category was most appropriate for a given campus (e.g., Fresno), and b) geography and curriculum may suggest competing criteria (e.g., Bakersfield).

LEVELS OF STUDENT SATISFACTION

Perhaps the most important and revealing portion of the SNAPS study was a section which presented 24 items for students to a) rate according to their educational importance, and b) evaluate according to their perceived quality. The findings are worth reporting in some detail. The next page shows the percentages and rankings for each group based on those who responded "very important" or "important" for "a", and "excellent" or "good" for "b". Here are the most significant summary observations which should be made about these figures:

1) With the exception of a few relatively minor items at the bottom, the gap between rated "importance" and perceived "quality" is wide and almost universally negative.

2) Six of the top seven factors in importance are directly related to classroom instruction, and manifest an average "quality discrepancy" of 30 percentage points, although the average difference in rankings is only -1.

3) The remaining 17 factors address various forms of student services, social activities, and academic support functions. Although these are less important concerns, they too are sources of considerable dissatisfaction (notably, academic and career advising and administrative responsiveness).

4) In general, few institutional factors of an academic nature were able to match ratings of quality with ones of importance. It would probably be unrealistic to expect them to do so. Still, the magnitudes of the differences and the number of discrepancies in rankings provide at least some clues to areas that need improvement. The most important ones appear to be course scheduling, academic advising, career assistance, and grading policies. The two academic factors that received the most favorable evaluations were faculty accessibility and the library and other educational resources. Most measures of classroom instruction fell between these low and high rankings.

5) While the percentages on the quality of most campus programs and services are much lower than those of importance, the rankings between the two categories are more congruent. For example, the most important concern of students -- instructional quality -- was favorably

Ranking in Importance & Quality of Factors Instrumental in Achieving Educational Goals

Factor	Importance Ranking	Quality Ranking	Ranking Difference	Percent Importance	Percent Quality	Percent Difference
Quality of instruction	1	2	-1	98	70	-28
Content of courses offered	2	4	-2	94	66	-28
Fairness and appropriateness of testing & grading	3	6	-3	90	60	-30
Library and other educational resources	4	1	+3	89	77	-11
Course scheduling	5	9	-4	88	48	-40
Variety of courses offered	5	5	0	88	61	-27
Intellectual stimulation from faculty	6	7	-1	86	58	-28
Academic advising	7	11	-4	82	44	-38
Faculty accessibility	8	3	+5	80	67	-13
Career guidance from faculty	9	13	-4	72	38	-34
Helpful and responsive office personnel (e.g. Admiss. & Rec.)	10	10	0	70	47	-23
Parking	11	19	-8	62	28	-34
Responsive administration	11	20	-9	62	26	-36
Intellectual stimulation from other students	12	12	0	60	43	-17
Career contacts thru faculty & alumnae	13	22	-9	57	19	-38
Career guidance from Career Planning Office	14	18	-4	52	30	-22
Personal counseling	15	18	-3	49	30	-19
Opportunity to make friends and improve social life	15	9	+6	49	48	-1
Opportunity to appeal rules and decisions	16	21	-5	47	21	-26
Financial aid (on-campus)	17	17	0	46	31	-15
Adequate information distribution (bulletin boards, etc.)	17	8	+9	46	56	+10
Tutoring/basic skills development	18	16	+2	42	34	-8
Social and cultural activities and facilities	19	14	+5	27	36	+9
Athletic programs, facilities and activities	20	15	+5	16	35	+19

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evaluated by only 70%, but that factor ranked second in quality among the 24 items. Faculty accessibility, on the other hand, was one of the more extreme cases; it ranked third in quality with a 67% favorable rating, yet was eighth in importance with a 80% rating.

6) Several activities of least importance to students (social life, activities, and facilities; information dissemination; and athletic programs, facilities, and activities) are among the most favorably evaluated. This finding may raise some interesting questions about the distribution and use of resources at some institutions.

Ratings of Academic Importance

Logically, it makes sense to find out whether students care anything about a particular issue before asking them to evaluate its quality. Although almost everyone thinks that academic issues of instruction, courses, and grading are important, student groups often vary widely in terms of the importance they attach to support services and campus social life. Here are the major differences by several categories of students:

Age, Level, Marital Status - Younger, lower-division, and single students all attached greater importance to social life and activities, athletics, financial aid, and tutoring, while older students expressed above-average concern for intellectual stimulation from faculty.

Sex - Athletics was the only item which was more important to males than females. The latter were much more likely to emphasize the importance of instructional quality, advising, course content and variety, faculty accessibility and stimulation, grading fairness, scheduling, and so forth. It is difficult to avoid the general impression that females tend to be more "serious" students than males.

Employment - There were only two areas of major differences by employment status. Working students were more interested in class scheduling and parking, while those with few or no job commitments rated social life and activities higher in importance.

Ethnicity - In rank order, all ethnic minorities attached greater importance than whites to each of the following items:

Tutoring
Financial Aid
Personal Counseling
Opportunity to appeal rules and decisions
Information Distribution
Social Activities

Thus, the perceived importance of academic issues and concerns vary by ethnicity in only an indirect sense; i.e., through demands for support services.

Workload - Again, only scheduling and parking were of greater concern to part-time students. Full-time students expressed far more interest (particularly at semester campuses) in such things as social life, financial aid, career guidance, and tutoring; they were slightly more concerned than part-timers about academic advising and instructional quality.

GPA - It was reassuring to confirm that students with high grade point averages attached greater importance to academic concerns, and that students with low GPAs ranked social activities and support services higher in importance than others; however, the percentage differences were not impressive.

Major - Students majoring in psychology, the humanities, and the arts rated faculty stimulation as a very important concern, while majors in computer science, agriculture, and engineering attached much less importance to this issue. In fact, mathematics and computer science majors even rated instructional quality as being far lower in importance than other students.

Otherwise, variations by major were relatively slight, but are worth noting. Scheduling was of least concern to students majoring in agriculture, architecture, and the arts. Course variety was rated high in importance by arts, communications, humanities, and psychology majors, and low in importance by majors in computer science, engineering, and mathematics. The latter two disciplines, along with architecture, also rated advising lower in importance than majors in other degree programs. In general, majors in the technical, professional disciplines (as well as mathematics), tended to be less concerned than others about courses, instruction, or support services.

Ratings of Academic Quality

In general, there tended to be less variance in ratings of perceived quality than in ratings of importance. In other words, there was a fair amount of consensus across student groups about how "good" or "bad" academic programs, support services, or campus social life happened to be, whatever their relative importance. In some cases, the variance was reduced because many students simply said they did not know or had no opinion about the quality of a particular item; if it was rated low in importance, there was little reason why they should know or care about its quality.

Age, Level, Workload - Younger, full-time and lower-division students were all slightly more pleased with campus social life, tutoring, and financial and information services. However, the most satisfied group was clearly students over 50 years of age (N = 487). Satisfaction levels for the 50+ students averaged about twenty percentage points higher than for the under 20 group; this was true both for academic issues and support services.

Ethnicity - Two important findings emerged from the ethnic distributions of quality ratings. First, Blacks and Hispanics expressed the highest levels of satisfaction with financial aid, tutoring, and rules appeals. Second, Asian students were the least satisfied ethnic group across virtually every category. For example, while 73% of Whites rated instructional quality as "excellent" or "good", only 54% of the Asian students agreed. Faculty accessibility and stimulation, financial aid, and tutoring were also areas of dissatisfaction among Asians.

GPA - Predictably, students with high grade point averages rated courses, faculty, and instruction more favorably than low achievers. Those with low GPAs were slightly more impressed with campus social activities and support services. Again, the percentage differences were not great, and would probably be even less if controls were introduced for class level.

Major - Three related academic items produced the greatest amount of variance by discipline groupings - instructional quality, faculty stimulation, and faculty accessibility. Students majoring in the social sciences, humanities, arts, and (curiously) mathematics gave the highest ratings to these issues, while majors in engineering, computer science, and architecture were the least satisfied with their quality.

Campus Type - Although large versus small and semester versus quarter campuses did not vary significantly in their ratings of importance, there were some perceived qualitative differences by campus type. Large campuses scored more positive ratings for course variety; otherwise, it was the small campuses where students were more favorably impressed by instructional quality, faculty accessibility and stimulation, tutoring services, and administrative responsiveness.

Other - Sometimes null findings are more substantively significant than positive ones - they were certainly more numerous in this survey. One might assume that some standard demographic variables would be closely related to student ratings of academic and service quality; however, such intuitive relationships turned out to be either very weak

or nonexistent. For example, although females attached far greater importance to several of the 24 items, their evaluations of quality were not significantly different from those of male students. Moreover, there were no significant relationships between transfer plans and evaluation of any academic issue or support service. Despite relatively high levels of dissatisfaction with courses, faculty, advising, scheduling, and so forth, these apparently were not serious enough to cause students to think about transferring.

Instructional Quality and Student Advising

One of the most consistent patterns in the data was the strong positive relationships between the perceived quality of academic instruction, support services, and social life on the one hand, and overall satisfaction with one's campus experience on the other. The higher students evaluated items in each of these categories, the more satisfied they were in general. And since instructional quality is the most important concern of CSU students, it is not surprising that the percentages below represent the strongest correlation anywhere in the SNAPS study.

RATING OF INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY

Satisfaction with Campus Experience	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Very Satisfied	43	13	5	4	2
Satisfied	53	79	65	41	17
Dissatisfied	3	8	21	41	40
Very Dissatisfied	0	0	4	15	41

Thirty percent of the sample rated instructional quality as being "fair," "poor," or "very poor." When asked to choose two major reasons for these negative ratings, students responded in the following fashion:

Inability of instructors to communicate subject matter	46%
Instructors show lack of interest or enthusiasm for teaching	30%
Instructors are inconsistent in testing and grading, give unclear assignments	27%
Some courses lack depth	27%

Some courses lack breadth - they do not cover enough relevant material	23%
Instructors seem unqualified or show poor command of subjects	18%
Academic standards are low, some courses are geared to the lowest level students	13%
Racial or sex bias shown by instructors	7%

Clearly, the major problems seem to be ones of poor communications skills on the part of faculty; students would like to see more classroom enthusiasm, greater interpersonal concern, and more clarity in grading and assignments. Otherwise, both course content and instructor knowledge were faulted.

Forty-four percent of the sample also rated academic advising on their campus as being "fair," "poor," or "very poor." Lack of administrative coordination of advising services was cited by 41% of these students as the major reason for poor advisement. Advisor empathy, availability, knowledge, and judgment also received the following negative evaluations:

Advisement is not coordinated between advisors, departments, and other administrative offices on campus	41%
Advisors show a lack of concern or interest for students' needs	37%
Advising or advisors are unavailable when needed	28%
Advisors are poorly informed about academic programs and requirements	26%
Advisors give incorrect recommendations to students	15%

Transfer Plans and Overall Satisfaction

One means of imbuing broad attitudes and evaluations with greater meaning is to ask questions which carry more explicit behavioral implications. Students were asked if they planned to transfer to another college or university before graduating from their current degree programs. Nine percent responded "yes," another 16% said "possibly," and 75% indicated no plans to transfer.

Transfer plans were not strongly related to any of the standard demographic variables or to type of campus environment. However, there was a slight tendency for transfer intentions to be more heavily concentrated among the following groups of students: younger, lower-division students with lower grade point averages, full-timers, single, and nonemployed. Obviously, the reverse of these categories suggests more ties to the immediate environment. Students majoring in the physical and biological sciences, arts, architecture, and communications were most likely to express definite or possible transfer intentions.

Of course, transfer plans logically lead to questions of "where" and "why". Here are the findings for the nine percent who definitely had such plans:

WHERE	
CSU	30%
UC	26%
Private	13%
Undecided	12%
Out of State	11%
Community and Vocational	4%
Other	3%
Unspecified	1%

WHY	
To attend a "better" school (reputation/prestige of specific programs or school as a whole)	47%
To obtain a degree in or participate in a program or classes not available at current school	38%
To obtain an advanced degree (MA, Ph.D, MD, etc.)	34%
Desire for change (social, academic, environmental)	32%
Other institution has "more" to offer (variety of courses/ programs, support services, etc.)	30%
Relocation to another area because of job, marriage, etc.	13%
Other institution is closer to home or work	10%

Two things are worth noting about these data. First, only 39% of the potential transfers are "lost" to competing segments in the state, while 30% planned to change campuses within the CSU system. Second, there is little that a given campus can do (cheaply and quickly) to change any of the above reasons for leaving -- in fact, all of them make good sense.

At the end of the questionnaire, students were given the opportunity to offer a sort of summary evaluation of their campus experience. They were asked to respond to the following statement: "I am pleased with my overall experience on this campus." The percentage responses were as follows:

Strongly Agree	14%
Agree	63%
Disagree	11%
Strongly Disagree	2%
Undecided	10%

Thus, fully 77% expressed positive sentiments about their current educational environment. Overall satisfaction levels did not show much variation by level, major, sex, workload, marital or employment status, or campus type. There was a slight tendency for Asian students to be less satisfied than other ethnic groups, and for students over 35 years of age and those with higher grade point averages to be more satisfied. Otherwise, less satisfied students tended to cite campus-related obstacles to their education more often than external ones, and to profess a greater propensity to transfer than satisfied students.

The antecedents of student attrition (whether stopout or dropout) have been of considerable interest in higher education for several decades. Every conceivable variable has been scrupulously examined in efforts to determine its explanatory potential for such behavior.[3] In general, explanations have tended to be one of three types: demographic (age, race, grade point average, family and financial circumstances, and so forth); psychological (educational motivations, personality characteristics); or institutional (programs, scheduling, instructional quality, support services, etc.). The basic issue underlying almost all attempts to understand student attrition and promote student retention is simply this: Do students leave because they are being "pulled" away from college by cultural, social, economic, or personal forces over which they (and especially the institution) have little or no control, or are they being "pushed" away by institutional policies and practices such as poor scheduling, indifferent instructors, and inadequate support services?

There are essentially two ways of finding answers to such questions -- direct and indirect. The indirect method relies on correlations between student intentions and behavior (withdrawal or persistence) and a host of objective measures such as race, sex, age, employment status, personality types, and campus characteristics. Continuation and graduation rates are thus viewed as products of factors in the student's social, personal, or campus environment which can be identified and measured. Using this approach, one is able to specify the external and personal conditions under which persistence rates are likely to be highest. The ultimate motivational question of "why" students stay or leave is thus inferred from such correlations and indirect indicators.

A second, more direct, route to tapping the motivational roots of student behavior is merely to ask them to identify their own reasons for possibly leaving college. Two objections are routinely levied against this approach: First, students do not "know" the "real" reasons for their behavior; and secondly, they cannot be trusted to reveal their "true" motivations, even in an anonymous survey. No doubt there are numerous complex external and internal forces which may either push or pull students away from campus, and about which they may be wholly or partially ignorant. It is also plausible to suspect that many students may offer socially acceptable responses to questions which may (indirectly) imply personal failure if answered another, more "truthful" way. Despite these problems, survey data do offer clues to

the puzzle of attrition which should not be dismissed too lightly. When combined with correlational data and more objective indicators of student behavior, survey evidence can serve to provide a more complete picture of the total process of persistence and withdrawal.

Campus Obstacles and Retention

The findings from several attrition-related questions in the SNAPS study carry rather great importance. When asked which of the following presented the greatest obstacle to reaching their educational goals, students offered these responses:

Campus-related factors (such as course variety, scheduling, instructors, support services, etc.)	25%
External factors (such as family obligations, job, finances, personal problems, etc.)	40%
I do not see any obstacles to completing my education.	34%

Thus, even when offered an explicit opportunity to "blame" the institution for stopping or dropping out, only one in four is willing to do so. Neither campus instructional programs or support services appear to be driving students away as much as they may be pulled away by personal circumstances and external forces. Indeed, one-third of the sample was relatively unconcerned about either category of obstacles.

When the question of educational obstacles was examined in greater detail, at least three major patterns could be identified:

1) No substantively significant differences emerged among categories of class level, age, major, sex, or campus type (large versus small or semester versus quarter). The basic distributions linking obstacles to "campus-related factors," "external factors," and "none" were consistently reinforced. However, there was a slight tendency for part-time and employed students to cite external obstacles more often than average, and for full-time students and those not employed to choose the option of "none." Asian students were somewhat more critical of campus factors than other ethnic groups, and Hispanics cited external factors with greater frequency.

2) Another null finding of note was the absence of any important differences between transfer intentions and educational obstacles. In other words, students who professed plans to leave a CSU institution were no more likely than persistors to cite campus-related factors as obstacles. Apparently, decisions to transfer are independent of anything a given institution may be doing or not doing.

3) The existence (or perception) of educational obstacles bears a definite relationship to academic performance. Students with high grade point averages are much more likely to cite no obstacles, while those with relatively low GPAs tend to cite external (again, not campus) factors.

Students were also asked to choose two reasons why they think students (in general) might drop out of school at their particular campus. Here are the rank-ordered responses:

Lack of interest, motivation, goals	36%
Financial problems	30%
Time conflicts, demands or work/job or family	23%
Emotionally unprepared to cope with the demands of college	18%
Academically unprepared to do college-level work	16%
Poor academic performance, bad grades	16%
"Burnout"	14%
Personal or family problems	9%
Shortcomings of the academic programs	9%
Education unnecessary or unrelated to life goals or job	6%
Shortcomings of the institution	4%
Transportation	2%

Notice that "shortcomings of the academic programs" and "shortcomings of the institution" were identified by only nine and four percents, respectively. The more popular choices all focused on maladaptive psychological characteristics of students, poor levels of academic preparedness, and external demands of time and finances. Of course, these percentages reflect only student opinions and interpretations about a complex behavioral decision of others, but they do suggest some important insights into the assumptions which govern student perceptions of persistence and withdrawal.

The survey provided a list of seventeen specific actions which an institution might take to help reduce or eliminate any educational obstacles which the student had previously identified, whether campus or externally related. The students were asked to check no more than three options. Ten percent of those with problems still insisted that "the school can do nothing about my problems," and seven percent said "the school is already doing what it can to help." Here is the rank-ordered listing of the other responses:

Offer a greater variety/number of courses	30%
Increase/improve availability of financial aid	27%
Change course scheduling	25%
Monitor/remove ineffective instructors, hire effective ones	23%
Make financial aid processing easier	17%
Offer a greater variety/number of academic programs	15%
Provide more/better academic advising	15%
Provide more/better career guidance	13%
Increase/improve information about financial aid	13%
Improve the quality of the academic programs/courses	12%
Increase/improve tutoring services	7%
Increase/improve personal counseling (psychological)	6%

Provide (more) on-campus housing	6%
Improve library services	5%
Change the grading system	5%
Change admissions requirements	4%
Provide more/better on-campus child care services	3%

The list speaks for itself: course variety and class scheduling; financial aid availability, processing, and information; and instructional quality and advising are clearly the areas of greatest concern. Of least importance are such things as child care services, admissions requirements, grading policies, library services, campus housing, psychological counseling, and tutoring.

The survey also sought more detailed responses to three specific issues which might affect progress toward an educational objective -- finances, class scheduling, and unit loads.

Finances

When asked if they were concerned about financing their college education, the sample provided these responses:

No, I will have sufficient funds.	34%
Yes, somewhat concerned. But I will probably have enough funds to continue.	41%
Yes, very concerned. I may not have enough funds to continue.	20%
Yes, extremely concerned. I will not have enough funds to continue.	5%

Thus, roughly one-fourth of the students in the CSU may be feeling a severe financial squeeze despite the existence of low fees and tuition levels compared to norms nationally, in the University of California, or in private institutions in the state. At least two interpretations seem plausible. On the one hand, the CSU system may tend to attract many students whose discretionary income for education is not very great or very flexible in the first place. On the other hand, financial "need" (like any kind of perceived need) is a relative concept and therefore is partly a function of wants, choices, comparisons, expectations, and cost-benefit

trade-offs. Education must compete with other financial demands and conveniences, and the individual must assess its relative priority against other wants and against expectations about its ultimate value; thus, claims of financial "need" should be interpreted with some caution in the absence of more objective indicators and standardized points of comparison.

All of the following groups expressed greater than average concern about school financing: students who were lower division, younger, single, full time, not employed, who had transfer intentions, and who perceived external (as opposed to campus-related) obstacles to reaching their educational goals. All ethnic minorities were slightly more concerned than Whites.

Class Scheduling

Like advising, class scheduling has been a perennial problem for academic administrators concerned with promoting student retention and encouraging higher unit loads. Although faculty convenience is often blamed for poor scheduling practices, space constraints and other factors may be of equal or greater importance. Nevertheless, students were asked to identify the times they usually attend class, and to indicate their preferences for course scheduling. Here are the comparative findings:

TIMES:	Take Classes	Prefer to Take Classes	Percentage Difference
Before 8am	3.7%	5.5%	+1.8
Between 8am and 10am	49.3%	49.7%	+.4
Between 10am and Noon	60.7%	64.4%	+3.7
Between Noon and 2pm	44.7%	38.0%	-6.7
Between 2pm and 4pm	28.5%	18.3%	-10.2
Between 4pm and 6pm	23.3%	16.2%	-7.1
Between 6pm and 8pm	30.1%	20.6%	-9.5
Between 8pm and 10pm	20.2%	11.1%	-9.1

Predictably, more students would like to attend class before noon than actually do so. Otherwise, all of the other time blocks receive some demand, although demand in each is always below actual attendance patterns.

Workload

Until recently, declining unit load in the system has been a prime contributor to FTES decline on many campuses,[4] even in the face of increasing enrollments. Conversely, fewer enrollments are required in order to achieve FTES targets if unit loads can be maintained or increased. Thus, from a FTES standpoint, unit load is as much a component of the attrition problem as enrollments.

Students were asked to check as many factors as applicable to explain their unit loads. Five reasons emerged as being rather important, and another five were considerably less significant. Here are the percentages:

The number of units I can take and still get good grades	57%
The time that courses are scheduled	56%
The demands of my work/job schedule	46%
Whether courses required for my academic program are offered or not	41%
The number of units I need to graduate by a certain time	40%
The time demands or needs of my family	20%
The number of units required to keep my financial aid	14%
Recommendations of my advisor	11%
The amount of money I have available to spend on education	9%
Nothing in particular, I take whatever I find interesting	3%

Again, course scheduling, convenience, and job demands are very important, but so too are academic considerations of grades and degree requirements. Finances and advising apparently play only minor roles.

THE SAMPLE: PROCEDURE AND REPRESENTATIVENESS

A total of 8,564 students responded to the SNAPS questionnaire systemwide. The basic sampling design consisted of a stratified cluster sample, using class sections as the unit of analysis. Six clusters of sections were identified from the schedule of classes in the Spring 1981 semester (or quarter). The clusters were based on class level and day-evening start times; accordingly, the six clusters were:

lower-division day sections

upper-division day sections

graduate-division day sections

lower-division evening sections

upper-division evening sections

graduate-division evening sections

Average class sizes for each level were used to determine the number of sections required from each cluster to yield the desired minimum sample sizes of 500 cases for small campuses and 800 cases for large campuses. A computerized random number generator or table of random numbers was used to provide lists of section numbers to be included from each cluster.

A faculty coordinator and student assistants implemented administration of the survey, and the questionnaires were forwarded to the Social Systems Research Center at CSU, Dominguez Hills for data processing. Appendices A and B, respectively, contain descriptions of the sampling procedures and a copy of the questionnaire.

Strictly speaking, the population from which the sample was drawn is classes, not students. However, the actual intent of the sample is to draw inferences from it about the student population at all 19 CSU campuses. Two assumptions are involved: First, that a random sample of classes will also provide a random sample of students; and second, that the 12 participating institutions are representative of all of the campuses in the system. Quota comparisons between sample characteristics and system characteristics of students suggest that these assumptions were indeed reasonable.

Seven of the twelve large campuses in the system participated in the survey, while five of the seven small campuses were represented. Here are the campuses by category:

Large Participating	Small Participating	Large Non-Participating	Small Non-Participating
Fresno	Bakersfield	Chico	Hayward
Fullerton	Dominguez Hills	Long Beach	Stanislaus
Los Angeles	Humboldt	San Diego	
Northridge	San Bernardino	San Jose	
Pomona	Sonoma	San Luis Obispo	
Sacramento			
San Francisco			

Of course, further distinctions are possible among the campuses: urban-rural, semester-quarter, degree program emphasis. But the real issue is whether the sample is reasonably representative of student (as opposed to campus) characteristics systemwide by such standard indicators as age, class level, sex, major, GPA, ethnicity, and unit loads.

The tables on the next two pages show that the sample provided a near perfect match with systemwide percentages of students by class level, sex, ethnicity, age, and major. These exceptions might be noted:

1) For whatever reasons, there were three percent too many juniors, and three percent too few graduate students in the sample.

2) There were five percent too few Whites, and three percent too many Asians in the sample. This is probably due to the mix of participating and non-participating campuses in the survey.

3) All age groups in the system were fairly represented except the 35-39 and 40+ age cohorts which were substantially under- and over-represented, respectively. However, these groups comprised a small enough percentage of the total, and their ages are close enough that the mean sample age was 25.3 years compared to 25.5 years systemwide.

CLASS LEVEL

	Sample	CSU-S81
Freshman	12	13
Sophomore	13	13
Junior	26	23
Senior	30	29
Graduate	19	22

SEX

	Sample	CSU-S81
Female	53	52
Male	47	48

ETHNICITY

	Sample	CSU-F80
American Indian	1	1
Black	8	7
Chicano	8	7
Other Hispanic	3	2
Asian	11	8
Pacific Islander	1	1
White	68	73
Filipino	1	1

AGE

	Sample	CSU-F80
20 & Under	27%	25%
21 - 24	36%	36%
25 - 29	18%	19%
30 - 34	9%	10%
35 - 39	4%	11%
40+	6%	.4%
	X = 25.3	X = 25.5

MAJOR

	Sample	CSU-F80
Undeclared	8%	10%
Agriculture	5%	3%
Area Studies	.3%	.1%
Biological Sciences	3%	4%
Physical Sciences	2%	1%
Architecture	.9%	.8%
Fine and Applied Art	4%	5%
Business Administration	23%	21%
Communications	3%	3%
Computer and Information Science	2%	2%
Education	8%	7%
Engineering	6%	8%
Foreign Languages	1%	1%
Health Sciences	5%	4%
Humanities	3%	3%
Home Economics	2%	2%
Mathematics	.7%	.8%
Public Services	4%	4%
Psychology	4%	4%
Social Sciences	8%	5%
Special Majors	4%	4%
Credentials	.6%	-
Other	1%	-

Workload comparisons were less consistent. While 83% of the sample reported themselves as full-time students, only 59% of the enrollments systemwide were full time in Spring 1981. Further analysis showed that this discrepancy was not an artifact of campus type (semester versus quarter) or of participating versus non-participating campuses. Rather, it can be explained by two factors. First, since the sample was based on classes rather than students, full-time students obviously had a greater chance of being selected since they were represented in more classes; in that sense, the discrepancy was a natural product of the sampling methodology. Second, the percentage of full-timers in the sample is probably artificially inflated because of the phrasing of the question which asked, "How many units do you usually take?" The question did not ask for the number of units the student actually had on census date in the spring semester. For these reasons, the apparent over-representation of full-time students in the sample is neither unexpected nor very serious.

Comparisons of grade point averages, as well, are not straightforward. First, the questionnaire asked for campus GPAs, while most system statistics are based on cumulative GPAs. Second, self-reported GPAs are always higher than actual GPAs, so it was not surprising that the mean undergraduate GPA for the system was 2.7, whereas that for the sample was reportedly over 3.0. Of course, the variance in overall graduate GPAs is very slight in any case. For these reasons, the uses and interpretations of grade point averages in the study demand caution.

In general, there is little reason to believe that the distributions of opinions in the sample are not representative of those in the student population systemwide. As points of information, here are the sample percentages on marital status, number of dependents, and employment status (no systemwide figures are available):

MARITAL STATUS

Married	23%
Single, never married	70%
Divorced/Separated	7%
Widowed	.6%

NUMBER OF FINANCIAL DEPENDENTS

None, I am considered dependent	32%
Myself only	47%
Two, including myself	11%
Three, including myself	5%
Four, including myself	3%
Five, including myself	1%
Over five	.6%

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Not working	24%
1-20 hours/week	34%
21-39 hours/week	22%
40 hours/week (full time)	15%
41-98 hours/week	4%

THE FINDINGS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Students in the California State University system seem to exhibit certain schizophrenic characteristics in their thinking and behavior. They do not rate the quality of instruction, advising, or scheduling as favorably as might be expected, yet few have any definite plans to transfer. Most are generally satisfied with their overall campus experiences and are extremely reluctant to blame the institution for any problems in reaching their educational objectives. Although the goal of attaining an academic degree has strong appeal, it must be achieved within a framework of more mundane considerations of convenience, costs, and career advancement. And while critical of many aspects of campus life, they are not cynical about the value of higher education.

Surveys are nothing more than a snapshot of a dynamic situation; opinions change over time, and vary by social, geographic, and economic conditions. How typical, then, are the findings from the SNAPS study? When compared to survey data recently collected at roughly comparable institutions elsewhere, are students in the CSU system above or below average, more or less satisfied?

Reliable comparisons are difficult for several reasons. Questionnaire styles and formats are seldom the same. Population and sample characteristics are never identical. The timing of a survey and the method of administration have independent effects on the results. Still, hundreds of surveys on college student attitudes have been conducted over the past decade, and several recent studies have attempted to summarize the findings from the most important of these. Four major summaries of survey data are:

Arthur Levine - <u>When Dreams and Heroes Died</u> (Jossey-Bass: 1980)

C. Robert Pace - <u>Measuring Outcomes of College</u> (Jossey-Bass: 1979)

Alexander Astin - <u>Four Critical Years</u> (Jossey-Bass: 1978)

Howard Bowen - <u>Investment in Learning</u> (Jossey-Bass: 1977)

Scores of survey instruments have been developed over the years to measure student perceptions and attitudes about their college environment and experiences. Some of the more popular ones include the Environmental Assessment Technique (EAT), the College Characteristics Index (CCI), the College and University Environment Scales (CUES), the College Student Questionnaire (CSQ), the Institutional Goals Inventory (IGI), the Inventory of College Activities (ICA), the Student Orientations Survey (SOS), Student Reactions to College (SRC), the freshman questionnaire from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), and scores of alumni surveys.[5] Data from all of these sources tend to show that college students in general, like the CSU sample, are very satisfied with their overall college experiences, despite persistent complaints about such things as advising and scheduling.

Bowen's extensive review of the literature reveals that, with few exceptions, "two-thirds to three-quarters of the students hold favorable attitudes" about their overall college experiences.[6] The CSU percentages, therefore, are perfectly consistent with findings elsewhere on this point.

Pace conducted an extensive analysis of evidence from "landmark studies and lines of inquiry, data obtained from large-scale testing programs and surveys, information about thousands of college students and alumni from hundreds of colleges and universities....over the past forty to fifty years."[7] He finds these "central tendencies" and consistencies in the data across time:

> Do college graduates have good jobs? Yes.
> Do college graduates have good incomes? Yes.
> Do college graduates like their jobs? Yes.
> Do college graduates think their education was relevant for their jobs? Yes.
> Do college graduates feel satisfied about the college they attended? Yes.
> Do college graduates participate actively in political, civic, and cultural enterprises? Yes.
> Do college graduates think their education developed their ability to think critically and express themselves clearly? Yes.
> Do college graduates think their education gave them breadth of knowledge about various fields? Yes.
> Do college graduates think their education helped them in understanding and relating to other people? Yes.
> Do college graduates think their education helped them develop and clarify their values and goals? Yes.

> These simple yes answers are based on evidence from alumni of many colleges, alumni who have been out of college for different lengths of time, and from surveys from the 1930s to the 1970s. If consistency is cause for confidence, we can be confident in what we know about college graduates.[8]

Thus, national surveys of entering freshmen, of seasoned undergraduates, and of alumni all suggest that current and former students make generally positive assessments about their college experiences. Of course, one would expect positive ratings from the success stories (i.e., graduates) as well as from current students -- both have made a commitment to and investment in college. A more complete study of student satisfaction levels should, by comparison, include stopouts and dropouts, although the cost and logistics of tracking and surveying large numbers of such students may be prohibitive.

On the other hand, there is little reason to believe that public evaluations of higher education should not be supportive. There is an enormous amount of systematic evidence to indicate that the effects of formal education are generally positive for both the individual and society. At the individual level, education tends to be associated with higher levels of intellectual competence and growth; greater interpersonal competence and trust; emotional and moral development; democratic values and behavior; autonomy; positive identities; occupational knowledge and skills; family responsibility; physical health and creative leisure; psychological adaptability and growth; aesthetic awareness; and economic rationality. At the social level, education is instrumental in promoting economic growth, political democracy and stability, and high levels of scientific knowledge and technological progress.[9]

Like the public generally, college students are products of an historical and cultural milieu. They exhibit most of the same cognitive orientations found in public opinion surveys of the general population. For example, the pervasive sense of cynicism and distrust toward public institutions in the 1980s are direct outgrowths of the Vietnam-Watergate era. Yet, curiously, higher education seems to have escaped much of the fallout in public thinking. The Jeffersonian ethos which exalts the virtues of formal education is as strong as ever. Education and hope for the future are inexorably linked in the political culture of the United States.[10] Indeed, a California poll in 1978 revealed that colleges and universities ranked higher in public confidence than banks and financial institutions, the medical profession, organized religion, the public school system, Congress, or the Supreme Court![11]

Levine recently reviewed conclusions from surveys of 95,100 undergraduates conducted in 1969 and 1976, a survey of a representative sample of 600 colleges and universities carried out in 1978, interviews with student leaders and groups at 26 institutions in 1979, and annual studies of the nation's college freshmen and high school seniors.[12] He suggests that a "Titanic ethic and mentality" grips the nation and higher education: "put simply, today's college students are optimistic (91%) about their personal future, but pessimistic (59%) about the future of the country."[13] Since 1969, students have become extremely career oriented and far less concerned with social or philosophical issues or "learning to get along with people." They are increasingly materialistic, competitive, even narcissistic; the idealism of the 1960s is clearly gone, and today's college students live in a time "when dreams and heroes have died."

Yet whatever the mood, all signs point to a new era in higher education, one of the supremacy of the mass student market.[14] For this reason alone, it makes sense to attempt to understand the political, social, and educational values of an enrollment-driven system.

> The road to survival now leads through the marketplace. A new "academic revolution" is upon us. In the 1960s the revolution consisted of many institutions trying to become research universities and mostly failing. In the 1980s and 1990s, it will take more the form of following the long-time example of the community colleges in adjusting to the market, and often succeeding. Excellence was the theme. Now it is survival. Institutions were trading up; now they are trading down.[15]

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The preceding pages have ranged over a wide spectrum of issues and data concerning the educational priorities, opinions, and problems of CSU students. This section will attempt to outline the dominant themes of the survey findings, and to offer some recommendations to guide future uses of the data by campus administrators.

At least two types of findings were produced by the SNAPS study -- those which tend to confirm intuitive assessments of CSU students, and others which tend to challenge conventional wisdom in some sense. The meaning of single rankings and percentage scores is not always clear, and correlation factors were seldom very impressive. Still, the scope of the data was such that certain patterns could be identified across many questions and across many types of students. Accordingly, the following broad conclusions offer reasonable summaries of the more detailed findings:

Life Goals and Educational Priorities --- There was little consistency between broad life goals and educational motivations and priorities. The former tended to concentrate on social and humanistic values, while the latter were dominated by personal career considerations. The only important differences within either category was student major. The results were not surprising. For example, majors in the arts emphasized the values of creativity and personal growth and expression; those in education and the health professions were interested in social pursuits and working with others; majors in the technical and professional fields expressed strong preferences for financial success and social status.

Campus Choice and Degree Objectives --- Program availability and reputation, low cost, and convenience to home and work are easily the dominant factors in student choice of a CSU campus to attend. This was particularly true for nontraditional students since the more traditional students usually cited a wider range of considerations, including social motivations. Large campuses were often chosen out of a concern for academic reputation, while smaller campuses were valued for their close interpersonal relationships. There was every indication that most students had serious academic goals (i.e., a degree) at their current institution, and that surprisingly large numbers had rather ambitious long-term degree plans.

Institutional Programs and Services --- Academic concerns rated much higher in importance to students than support

services or social activities, although the latter were often more favorably evaluated. Scheduling, advising, career assistance, grading, and administrative responsiveness were the areas that received the lowest student evaluations. Libraries and faculty accessibility were the most favorably evaluated items of importance.

Academic issues were of greatest concern to females and nontraditional students, while more traditional students and ethnic minorities rated social activities and support services higher in importance than did other groups. Majors in several technical and professional disciplines accorded low rankings to the importance of academic matters, yet they tended to be among the least satisfied with the quality of both faculty and instruction.

Lower-division, young, full-time, unemployed students, together with Blacks and Hispanics, were the groups most favorably impressed by the availability and quality of campus social activities and academic support services. White, nontraditional students on the other hand (especially older adults), expressed considerably less interest in such matters, but gave very positive evaluations of their academic experiences. Asian students were among the least satisfied groups on practically every issue, especially those concerning instruction and faculty. Small campuses were rated better than large campuses in almost every category. Finally, there was no significant relationship between student ratings of institutional quality (on programs or services) and plans to transfer; if students had transfer plans, they were usually unrelated to either successes or failures of their current institution.

Instructional Quality and Advising --- Thirty percent of the sample gave generally negative evaluations of instructional quality, citing poor communications skills and lack of interpersonal concern among faculty. Advising received negative ratings of 44%; students again emphasized the apparent lack of faculty empathy as well as poor administrative coordination of advising services.

Transfer Plans and Overall Satisfaction --- Fully 75% of the sample expressed no plans to transfer from their present campus before completing their educational objectives. Another 16% responded "possibly," and 9% had definite transfer plans. Traditional students and those with fewer external ties to the immediate environment are the most likely transfer prospects. For the most part, transfer plans tended to be products of either personal academic aspirations or external circumstances; seldom did they bear any significant relationships to the perceived quality of

instruction, support services, or social life at the current institution. Indeed, 77% of the sample gave a generally positive assessment of their overall experiences on campus, a percentage which remained relatively constant across almost all student categories.

Campus Obstacles and Student Retention --- Perhaps the clearest and most consistent pattern in the entire study concerned student attrition and retention. Campus obstacles (such as poor instruction, support services, scheduling, etc.) were cited by only 25% as being major impediments to reaching one's educational objectives. By comparison, external factors (e.g., family obligations, job, finances, personal problems, etc.) were chosen by 40%, and 34% said neither type of obstacle was a major problem. Although this general pattern tended to hold across most student categories, these exceptions could be identified: full-time and unemployed students were most likely to perceive "no" major obstacles; part-time, Hispanics, employed, and students with low grade point averages tended to be concerned about problems of an external nature; Asians were the only major group to consistently identify the institution as the source of greatest concern. For the most part, students were much more willing to "blame" themselves or external circumstances for educational problems, including intentions to transfer.

Finances, Scheduling, and Workload --- About one-fourth of the sample expressed serious concern about college finances, with ethnic minorities and traditional students being most concerned. Students would like to see more classes offered before the noon hour, and scheduling convenience was identified as a major factor in determination of unit loads. Grades and degree program requirements were also prime considerations influencing workload decisions.

It is never easy to get busy university administrators to study findings from the scores of research projects which cross their attention monthly. It is even more difficult to translate such data into concrete actions and policy decisions. The behavior patterns which animate university administration draw as much from political as management science. Empirical data may suggest certain options or form certain conclusions, but whether they are heeded depends on a host of broader considerations.

Still, there are a number of things which the individual campuses can and should do with the SNAPS findings. Here is a brief "action agenda" for campus administrators to consider:

1) The most important thing any campus can do with the SNAPS study is to perform a detailed analysis of the data from its own sample, and make some comparisons to

the systemwide findings. Offices of Institutional Research are logical ones to do this, although the data files are accessible to any campus computer user. Most of the 12 participating campuses have already begun this process following regional meetings to discuss the SNAPS data earlier this year.

The next logical step is dissemination of the campus and systemwide findings to key faculty, student, and administrative groups. Vice Presidents for academic affairs, school deans, directors of institutional research and advisement centers, deans of admissions and records and student services, faculty senate committees, and student associations are among the many campus constituencies with an obvious interest in such data. The individual campus reports should convey, at once, policy, operational, and analytic applications. The report should not only describe the ways in which a campus is typical or atypical, but explore the reasons why and what should be done about the situation, if anything.

All 19 campuses are encouraged to support and participate in future efforts to expand the scope, depth, and quality of the SNAPS project.

2) Asians were the only student group who gave consistently low ratings to almost every facet of campus life -- academic, social, and support services. They seemed particularly displeased with courses, instructional quality, advising, and faculty behavior generally. This matter deserves greater attention and study, especially at campuses with high concentrations of Asian students.

No doubt, the reasons are many and complex, but some initial hypotheses seem worth investigating. First, the distinction between native Asian students on the one hand, and Asian refugees and immigrants on the other, may be important; further, students from rural areas of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia may have different expectations and problems than Asians from urban areas or developed countries. Second, it is sometimes noted that Asian cultural norms place a heavy emphasis on family and peer support groups; consequently, such students may be less likely than other ethnic groups to seek out institutional means of assistance. Third, the academic and interpersonal expectations of Asian students about higher education may be unique enough to deserve systemwide attention. Finally, the technical orientations and skills of many Asian students may be far better

developed than those associated with language and writing. For all of these reasons -- cultural, psychological, and academic -- Asian students may be systematically disadvantaged in the system.

3) Like class scheduling, academic and career advising seems always to be favorite targets of student frustration. But the SNAPS findings added a couple of important twists to these issues. First, career advising emerged as a fairly important concern for most students. Although many campuses recently have expended major efforts in this area, the ratings of quality were still very low. Perhaps the efforts are still too concentrated; perhaps they have not been very effective. In either case, the problem apparently has not been solved and deserves yet another look.

   The resources spent on various forms of academic advising in the system have been substantial over the years. Innovative approaches can be found on almost every campus. Yet the problem of administrative coordination apparently has become so acute that even students recognize that all of the services in the world are inadequate if poorly delivered. The time may have arrived for a fundamental reorganization of advisement structures and procedures -- one of greater centralization within academic affairs of all advising services, greater faculty involvement through formal and informal reward systems, and greater use of computer-assisted advising. "Information distribution" was given extremely positive evaluations by students in the sample; academic and career advising is simply a more specialized dimension of that process, requiring the same levels of speed, accuracy, and efficiency.

4) Student retention has emerged recently as one of the most sacred objectives of higher education, even a moral duty, an absolute good. Such vigilance about student persistence also tends to breed a certain paranoia about their leaving. The SNAPS findings provide strong, persuasive evidence that withdrawal motivations and intentions are, at best, only weakly related to institutional programs or services, whatever their perceived quality. Students leave a given campus or higher education altogether for scores of reasons, most of which simply have nothing to do with institutional behavior.

   Yet, in an era of retrenchment generally, it might also be a good time for campuses to reevaluate the roles, costs, and effectiveness of the plethora of student

services and social programs which are supposed to recruit and retain students. The vast bulk of evidence in this study indicates that students want instructional quality, scheduling convenience, low cost, and career relevance. To the extent that peripheral, non-academic programs and services direct campus attention (and especially resources) away from these areas of highest priority, the institution may not lose many students, but neither is it meeting their dominant needs and expectations from higher education. There is an important difference between a student who persists because of convenience, and one who persists out of conviction.

5) Finally, the ultimate test of the value of a survey is whether it offers any insights into the actual behavior patterns of students. Fifty-two percent of the respondents in the SNAPS survey volunteered their student identification numbers. Serious thought should be given to linking the survey responses of these students to computerized data files on academic performance, workload, persistence, and other behavioral outcomes from alumni surveys (e.g., career advancement).

NOTES

1. Given the very large number of cases in the systemwide sample, virtually any relationship one chooses to examine turns out to be statistically significant. The only important issue, then, is substantive significance, which depends on the direction and magnitude of the differences among categories of the independent variable.

   Very few of the nominal and ordinal measures of association (whether Cramer's V or gamma) were impressive. Only a dozen or so of the correlations exceeded .30. In general, a positive relationship was not mentioned in the text unless it exceeded .15.

2. The literature on attitude and behavior consistency is gargantuan. For a representative survey of theories and data see the following: L. Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1957); J.W. Brehm and A.R. Cohen, Explorations in Cognitive Dissonance (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1962); M.J. Rosenberg, et al., Attitude Organization and Change (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960); M. Sherif and H. Cantril, The Psychology of Ego Involvements (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1947); C.W. Sherif and M. Sherif, Attitude and Attitude Change (Philadelphia: Saunders, 1965); M. Fishbein, ed., Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement (New York: Wiley, 1967); R.P. Abelson, et al., Theories of Cognitive Consistency: A Sourcebook (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968); H.C. Triandis, Attitude and Attitude Change (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1971); S. Feldman, ed., Cognitive Consistency: Motivational Antecedents and Behavioral Consequences (New York: Academic Press, 1966); C.A. Kiesler, B.E. Collins, and N. Miller, Attitude Change (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1969); M. Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1968); M. Sherif and C.I. Hovland, Social Judgment (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965); C.A. Insko, Theories of Attitude Change (New York: Appleton-Century, 1967).

3. Summaries of the literature on student retention include: Ernest Pascarella, ed., Analyzing Why Students Drop Out and How to Increase Retention (Jossey-Bass: New Directions for Institutional Research, forthcoming); Alexander Astin, Preventing Students from Dropping Out (Jossey-Bass, 1975); R. Cope and W. Hannah, Revolving College Doors (Wiley, 1975); Lee Noel, Reducing the Dropout Rate

(Jossey-Bass: New Directions for Student Services, 1978); Oscar T. Lenning, et al., Retention and Attrition: Evidence for Action and Research (NCHEMS, 1980); V. Tinto, "Dropout from Higher Education: A Review and Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research." Review of Educational Research, 45 (1975): 89-125; U.S. National Center for Education Statistics. Withdrawal from Institutions of Higher Education: An Appraisal with Longitudinal Data Involving Diverse Institutions. National Longitudinal Study, William B. Fetters, Project Officer. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977; Stephen L. Daigle, Attrition and Retention in the California State University and Colleges (Office of New Program Development and Evaluation; Chancellor's Office, CSU, 1979).

4. See the study by William Blishke, Those Who Stay - Less and Less (Office of New Program Development and Evaluation: Chancellor's Office, California State University, 1979).

5. For a description and evaluation of these instruments see Leonard L. Baird, et al., Understanding Student and Faculty Life (Jossey-Bass: 1980).

6. Howard Bowen, Investment in Learning (Jossey-Bass: 1978), p. 227.

7. C.R. Pace, Measuring Outcomes of College (Jossey-Bass: 1979), p. 6.

8. Ibid, p. 105-6.

9. See Bowen, op. cit.

10. The classic theoretical and empirical statement is G. Almond and S. Verba, The Civic Culture (Little, Brown: 1965).

11. Pace, op. cit., p. 232-34.

12. Arthur Levine, When Dreams and Heroes Died (Jossey-Bass: 1980).

13. Levine, "Going First Class on the Titanic." Change, Mar. 1981, p. 16.

14. See David Riesman, On Higher Education (Jossey-Bass: 1980).

15. Three Thousand Futures, Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education (Jossey-Bass: 1980), p. 30.

APPENDIX A

STUDENT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES SURVEY - PROCEDURES

Sampling Design -- The basic sampling design is a stratified cluster sample. The clusters are classes. The factors on which the clusters are to be stratified are: a) day classes vs. evening/Saturday classes, and b) graduate-level, upper-division, or lower-division classes.

The population of classes from which the sample is to be drawn is the Schedule of Classes for the Spring 1981 semester, or the Spring 1981 quarter. The sampling frame is to be arrived at by eliminating all of the following from the Schedule of Classes:

a) cancelled classes

b) independent studies courses and all other courses with a one-to-one student/teacher ratio

c) laboratories which are attached to lecture courses (independent laboratory courses should not be eliminated)

d) courses in which the students do not meet regularly in a classroom situation (e.g., work study or internship courses which do not include a regular in-class meeting)

The test of whether a course should be retained in the sampling frame is whether the students in the course meet in a classroom situation conducive for the administration of the Student Needs and Priorities Questionnaire.

The steps in the selection of the sample should be the following:

1. Obtain the Schedule of Classes for Spring semester/ quarter 1981.

2. Eliminate all cancelled classes from the schedule.

3. Eliminate all of the types of course offerings enumerated in the second and third paragraphs above.

4. Divide the courses in the schedule into those offered during daytime hours and those offered evening hours or Saturdays. Use your campus' definition of evening classes.

5. Divide the daytime courses into lower-division, upper-division, and graduate courses.

6. Divide the evening/Saturday courses into lower-division, upper-division, and graduate courses. (Professional courses will be grouped here.)

7. Determine what proportion of all of the courses in the sampling frame fall into the following six categories:

   lower-division daytime courses
   upper-division daytime courses
   graduate-level daytime courses
   lower-division evening/Saturday courses
   upper-division evening/Saturday courses
   graduate-level evening/Saturday courses

8. If your campus is designated as a "large" campus, your quota of completed questionnaires is a minimum of 800. If your campus is designated as a "small" campus, your quota of completed questionnaires is a minimum of 500. For the purposes of this study the following campuses will be considered "small": Bakersfield, Dominguez Hills, Humboldt, San Bernardino, and Sonoma. The following will be considered "large": Fresno, Fullerton, Los Angeles, Northridge, Pomona, Sacramento, and San Francisco.

   In order to determine the number of courses you will need to reach your quota, you will need to obtain estimates of average class sizes for lower-division, upper-division, and graduate courses. If possible, separate estimates should be obtained for daytime classes and for evening/Saturday courses.

9. To obtain the number of students needed in each of the six categories of courses enumerated in Step 7 above, multiply the quota of completed questionnaires for your campus (800 for large campuses or 500 for small campuses) by each of the six proportions you completed in Step 7. When these six products are obtained they should sum to 800 for large campuses and 500 for small campuses.

10. In order to determine how many courses from each of the six strata must be included in the overall sample, divide each of the six numbers obtained in Step 9 by the corresponding estimates of average class sizes obtained in Step 8. Preferably, there should be separate estimates of average class sizes for daytime and for evening/Saturday courses. If there are not separate estimates, then the single estimates from

lower-division, upper-division and graduate-level courses may be used to determine the required number of courses for both daytime and evening/Saturday courses.

11. Serially number the courses in the sampling frame separately for each of the six strata enumerated in Step 7.

12. Using a table of random numbers, select from each of the six strata the number of courses determined for each strata in Step 10. Sample without replacement (i.e., if lower-division daytime courses are needed, for example, use the table of random numbers to select 8 different courses from that stratum).

13. The combined list of courses from the six strata which were obtained in Step 12 constitute the stratified cluster sample for your campus. Every effort should be made to obtain completed questionnaires from the students in those courses. No student should, however, be expected to fill out a questionnaire in more than one of those courses. Therefore, a student who happens to be physically present in more than one of the courses will only be expected to fill out a questionnaire in one of those courses.

14. In anticipation of attrition in the number of courses selected in the sample because of oversights in reporting courses that have been cancelled, refusals of professors to allow questionnaires to be administered to students, or it is found that it is not possible to administer questionnaires in a course because it does not meet regularly or is otherwise unaccessible, it will be necessary to over-sample courses in order to have substitute courses available for those which are dropped from the original sample.

15. Large campuses should over-sample sufficient courses to have a potential of 1,200 student respondents and small campuses, 750 student respondents.

16. Over-sampled courses will be kept separate from the original sample until they are needed as substitutes for courses dropped from the original sample. Conceivably, the courses in the original sample may need to be supplemented by additional courses from the reserve (the pool of over-sampled courses) even though no courses are dropped from the original list. This could happen, for example, if the estimates of average class sizes turn out to be over-estimates and after administering questionnaires to students in all of the courses in the sample, the minimum sample size is not reached.

17. In order to obtain the lists of reserve courses for each of the six strata, for large campuses multiply 400 by each of the six proportions computed in Step 7 and for the small campuses multiply 250 by each of the six proportions computed in Step 7. Once the six products are obtained, divide them by the six estimates of average class sizes obtained in Step 8. The results of these divisions will be the numbers of courses required for the reserve lists for the six strata.

18. Using the same procedures described in Step 12, sample courses for the reserve lists. Courses on the reserve lists should be listed in the same order as they were selected in the samples.

19. When it becomes necessary to use courses from the reserve lists to substitute for courses dropped from the original sample or to supplement the courses in the original sample, the courses on the reserve lists should be selected in the same order as they appear in the lists. For example, if it is necessary to add two additional courses to the list of upper-division daytime classes drawn for the original sample because of attrition to that list, the first two courses on the reserve list of upper-division daytime courses should be those selected.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES
STUDENT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES SURVEY

CASE NO.					PG	SCH
0	0	0	0	0	0	0 0
1	1	1	1	1	1	1 1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2 2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3 3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4 4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5 5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6 6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7 7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8 8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9 9

INSTRUCTIONS:

1) Fill the circle completely of the item which best reflects your experience, opinion or feelings.
2) For those questions which require your written response, please write clearly, and only within the space outlined for your response.

Please keep in mind that a response from you on **each of the questions** is essential to the success of this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

CORRECT MARKS ●●●

INCORRECT MARKS ⊘⊗◎

USE NO. 2 PENCIL ONLY

QUESTION 1. In living your life, how important do you consider each of the following?

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important At All
An opportunity to use my special abilities and aptitudes	1	2	3	4	5
A chance to earn a great deal of money	1	2	3	4	5
An opportunity to be creative and original	1	2	3	4	5
Social status and prestige	1	2	3	4	5
An opportunity to work with people rather than things	1	2	3	4	5
A stable, secure future	1	2	3	4	5
An opportunity to be relatively free of supervision by others	1	2	3	4	5
A chance to exercise leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Adventure	1	2	3	4	5
An opportunity to be helpful to others	1	2	3	4	5

QUESTION 2. All of us have different reasons for pursuing a college education, and those reasons have varying degrees of priority at different times in our academic careers. Please select the reason that **currently has the HIGHEST PRIORITY** in your educational career.

(MARK ONLY ONE)

- **SOCIAL GROWTH/UNDERSTANDING:** an increase in your awareness and understanding of other persons and the development of personal relationships ○
- **CAREER PREPARATION/JOB ENHANCEMENT:** the development of or increase in your knowledge and capabilities in a particular professional or vocational area ○
- **INTELLECTUAL GROWTH/STIMULATION:** the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, and the exchange of ideas – whether in a particular field or several that interest you ○
- **PERSONAL GROWTH/SELF UNDERSTANDING:** the development of your own life philosophy and an expanded understanding and acceptance of yourself as a person ○
- **AESTHETIC/CULTURAL AWARENESS:** the development of an appreciation and understanding of the art, music, drama, literature and culture of your own as well as other cultures ○

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QUESTION 3. Please rate the importance of each of the following factors in influencing your decision to attend **this particular** college/university.

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important At All
Close to home and/or work	1	2	3	4	5
Low cost	1	2	3	4	5
Overall appearance of campus	1	2	3	4	5
Size of campus population	1	2	3	4	5
Age of student body	1	2	3	4	5
General academic reputation of school	1	2	3	4	5
Chance to leave home	1	2	3	4	5
Academic reputation of a particular field or major	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity to work or maintain job while attending school	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of a particular major or academic program	1	2	3	4	5
Convenient public transportation to the school	1	2	3	4	5
City or geographic setting where campus is located	1	2	3	4	5
On-campus residences	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of on-campus child care services	1	2	3	4	5
The reputation of its athletic programs	1	2	3	4	5
Ethnic composition of the student body	1	2	3	4	5
Recommendations from friends or family members	1	2	3	4	5

QUESTION 4. How much **total time** have you spent attending school **at this particular institution** – excluding any period(s) of time during which you dropped out? (e.g., if you attended school here for 2 years, dropped out for 1 year, and have been back for 1 year, your total time **in attendance** would be 3 years)

(MARK ONLY ONE)

- ○ less than 6 months
- ○ 6 months to 1 year
- ○ 1.1 to 2 years
- ○ 2.1 to 3 years
- ○ 3.1 to 4 years
- ○ 4.1 to 5 years
- ○ over 5 years

OFFICE USE ONLY

0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

QUESTION 5. What is your major?

(write in this space only)

If undeclared fill in this circle ○

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

QUESTION 6 Many diverse factors play a part in helping us achieve our educational goals. ON THE LEFT, please rate the importance of the factors listed below in terms of their importance for your education. ON THE RIGHT, rate the quality of those factors as they exist on your campus.

IMPORTANCE FOR YOUR EDUCATION						QUALITY ON YOUR CAMPUS						
Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important At All		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	5	Athletic programs, facilities and activities	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Social and cultural activities and facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Course scheduling	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Content of courses offered	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Fairness and appropriateness of testing and grading	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Accessibility of faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Intellectual stimulation from faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Opportunity to appeal rules and decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Adequate information distribution (bulletin boards, newspaper, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Career guidance from faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Financial aid (on-campus)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Career guidance from Career Planning Office	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Opportunity to make friends and improve social life	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Variety of courses offered	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Tutoring basic skills development	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Availability of career contacts through faculty and alumnae	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Intellectual stimulation from other students	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Library and other educational resources	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Availability of parking	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Personal counseling	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Responsive administration	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	Helpful and responsive office personnel (for example Admissions & Records Office)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	**QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION**	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3	4	5	**ACADEMIC ADVISING**	1	2	3	4	5	6

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QUESTION 7. If, in Question 6, you rated the **QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION** on your campus as **FAIR, POOR,** or **VERY POOR,** what is the reason? (see next to last factor listed on the previous page)

(MARK NO MORE THAN 2 RESPONSES)

- ○ Instructors show lack of interest or enthusiasm for teaching
- ○ Inability of instructors to communicate subject matter
- ○ Instructors seem unqualified or show poor command of subjects
- ○ Instructors are inconsistent in testing and grading, give unclear assignments
- ○ Racial or sex bias shown by instructors
- ○ Some courses lack depth
- ○ Academic standards are low, some courses are geared to the lowest level students
- ○ Some courses lack breadth - they do not cover enough relevant material

QUESTION 8. If, in Question 6, you rated **ACADEMIC ADVISING** on your campus as **FAIR, POOR,** or **VERY POOR,** what is the reason? (see the last factor listed on previous page)

(MARK NO MORE THAN 2 RESPONSES)

- ○ Advising or advisors are unavailable when needed
- ○ Advisors are poorly informed about academic programs and requirements
- ○ Advisors show a lack of concern or interest for student's needs
- ○ Advisors give incorrect recommendations to students
- ○ Advisement is not coordinated between advisors, departments, and other administrative offices on campus

QUESTION 9. Which **ONE** of the following presents the greatest obstacle to reaching your educational goals?

(MARK ONLY 1)

- ○ **Campus-related factors** (such as course variety, scheduling, instructors, support services, etc.)
- ○ **External factors** (such as family obligations, job, finances, personal problems, etc.)
- ○ **I do not see any obstacles to completing my education.**

QUESTION 10. What could the campus do to help in eliminating any obstacle you marked in Question 9? (If you marked that you did not see any obstacle, **skip this question**)

(MARK NO MORE THAN 3 RESPONSES)

- ○ Increase/improve tutoring services
- ○ Provide more/better career guidance
- ○ Improve library services
- ○ Provide more/better on-campus child care services
- ○ Increase/improve personal counseling (psychological)
- ○ Provide (more) on-campus housing
- ○ Provide more/better academic advising
- ○ Increase/improve information about financial aid
- ○ Increase/improve the availability of financial aid
- ○ Make financial aid processing easier
- ○ Change course scheduling
- ○ Offer a greater variety/number of academic programs
- ○ Offer a greater variety/number of courses
- ○ Improve the quality of the academic programs/courses
- ○ Change the admissions requirements to the school or a specific program
- ○ Change the grading system
- ○ Monitor/remove ineffective instructors, hire effective ones
- ○ The school can do nothing about my problems
- ○ The school is already doing what it can to help

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QUESTION 11. Are you concerned about financing your college education?

(MARK ONLY 1)

- ○ **No,** I will have sufficient funds
- ○ **YES,** somewhat concerned. But, I will probably have enough funds to continue.
- ○ **YES,** very concerned. I may not have enough funds to continue.
- ○ **YES,** extremely concerned. I will not have enough funds to continue.

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QUESTION 12. What is your present class level in college? (include this quarter/semester)

(MARK ONLY 1)

- ○ Freshman (0-44 quarter units) (0-29 semester units)
- ○ Sophomore (45-89 quarter units) (30-59 semester units)
- ○ Junior (90-134 quarter units) (60-89 semester units)
- ○ Senior (135 + quarter units) (90 + semester units)
- ○ Graduate, Postbaccalaureate

QUESTION 13.

	Before 8 AM	Between 8-10 AM	Between 10-Noon	Between 12-2 PM	Between 2-4 PM	Between 4-6 PM	Between 6-8 PM	Between 8-10 PM
When do you take the majority of your classes?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧
	IF ACTUAL CLASS TIMES OVERLAP THESE FIVE BLOCKS, MARK AS MANY AS APPLY							
Of the times when it is possible for you to attend, **when do you prefer to take** the majority of your classes?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧
	MARK AS MANY AS APPLY							

QUESTION 14. What is your overall grade point average for the college work you have completed at this institution?

(MARK ONLY 1)

- ○ At or below 1.9
- ○ 2.0 to 2.4
- ○ 2.5 to 2.9
- ○ 3.0 to 3.4
- ○ 3.5 to 4.0
- ○ Not applicable, I am a new student here

QUESTION 15. How many units do you **usually** take per academic term? (select either quarter **or** semester system depending on your campus)

OR

Quarter Units [ ] (write in box only)

Semester Units [ ] (write in box only)

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Quarter System ○ NOT APPLICABLE

Semester System ○ NOT APPLICABLE

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QUESTION 16. What factor(s) determine the number of units you take per quarter/semester?

(MARK AS MANY AS APPLY)

- ○ the recommendations of my advisor
- ○ the times that courses are scheduled
- ○ whether courses required for my academic program are offered or not
- ○ the demands of my work/job schedule
- ○ the amount of money I have available to spend on education
- ○ the number of units I can take and still get good grades
- ○ the time demands or needs of my family
- ○ the number of units required to keep my financial aid (V.A., loan, grant, scholarship, etc.)
- ○ the number of units I need to graduate by a certain time
- ○ nothing in particular. I take whatever I find interesting

QUESTION 17. **(MARK ONLY 1)**

A. What is your highest degree objective at **this** college/university?

- ○ None, I am just taking classes.
- ○ Bachelor's Degree
- ○ Master's Degree
- ○ Other (such as a teaching credential or certificate)
- ○ Undecided

(MARK ONLY 1)

B. What is your highest degree objective **overall?**

- ○ None
- ○ Bachelor's Degree
- ○ Master's Degree
- ○ Ph.D. or Ed.D.
- ○ M.D., D.D.S., J.D. etc
- ○ Other (such as a teaching credential or certificate)
- ○ Undecided

QUESTION 18. Do you plan to transfer to another college or university to continue your education **before** graduation from your current degree program.

(MARK ONLY 1)

○ Yes ○ No ○ Possibly

QUESTION 19. If you answered **YES** to Question 18, where do you plan to transfer, and what is your reason? If you answered **NO**, or **POSSIBLY** to Question 18, skip this question.)

Where:

(write in this box only)

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⓪	⓪
①	①
②	②
	③
	④
	⑤
	⑥
	⑦
	⑧
	⑨

Reason: **(MARK NO MORE THAN 2 RESPONSES)**

- ○ To obtain an advanced degree (M.A., Ph.D., M.D., etc.)
- ○ To obtain a degree in or participate in a program or classes not available at current school
- ○ To attend a "better" school (reputation/prestige of specific programs or school as a whole)
- ○ Other institution has "more" to offer (variety of courses/programs, support services, etc.)
- ○ Relocation to another area because of job, marriage, etc.
- ○ Other institution is closer to home or work
- ○ Desire for change (social, academic, environmental)

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QUESTION 20. In your opinion, what are the **MAIN** reasons students drop out of school on this campus?

(MARK NO MORE THAN 2 RESPONSES)

- ○ Lack of interest, motivation, goals
- ○ Financial problems (need to support self/family)
- ○ Time conflicts, demands of work/job or family
- ○ Shortcomings of the academic program (variety/availability/quality of courses/programs, poor instructors)
- ○ Shortcomings of the institution (support services, social activities, facilities, parking, etc.)
- ○ Emotionally unprepared to cope with the demands of college
- ○ Academically unprepared to do college-level work
- ○ Personal or family problems
- ○ Poor academic performance, bad grades
- ○ Transportation problems, distance to the school, location
- ○ Education unnecessary or unrelated to life goals or job success
- ○ "Burn-out"
- ○ Don't know

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QUESTION 21. What is your gender?

○ Female ○ Male

QUESTION 22. How old were you on your last birthday?

(write here)

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QUESTION 23. What is your racial or ethnic group? **(MARK ONLY 1)**

- ○ American Indian
- ○ Black, Non-Hispanic
- ○ Chicano, Mexican-American
- ○ Other Hispanic
- ○ Asian
- ○ Pacific Islander
- ○ White, Non-Hispanic
- ○ Filipino

QUESTION 24. What is your present marital status? **(MARK ONLY 1)**

- ○ Married
- ○ Single, never married
- ○ Divorced/Separated
- ○ Widowed

QUESTION 25. How many persons are you financially responsible for? **(MARK ONLY 1)**

- ○ None, I am considered a dependent
- ○ Myself only
- ○ Two, including myself
- ○ Three, including myself
- ○ Four, including myself
- ○ Five, including myself
- ○ Over five

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QUESTION 26. Approximately how many hours a week are you employed?

Hours employed: (write here) ☐

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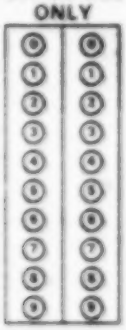


QUESTION 27. Please mark the **one** response that comes closest to your feeling about the following statement.

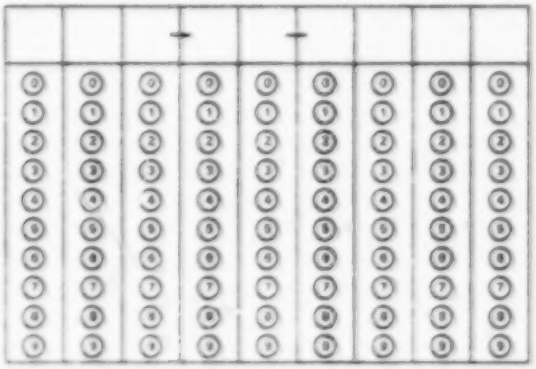
"I am pleased with my overall experience on this campus"

- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Undecided

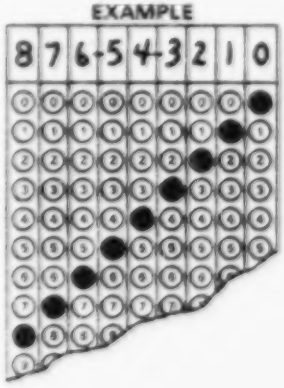
In order to use the results of this survey in a broader analysis over time, it will be necessary to compare data collected now with data collected in possible follow-up surveys. If you are willing to participate in such a follow-up survey, please indicate your social security number or student I.D. number below. (see example)

Remember – your number will be used anonymously for research purposes only.

Mark below if number used is your student I.D. number ○



EXAMPLE



THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

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